

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for aiding in the closure of a wound for use with at least one suture, said device comprising:

an external member having i) a tubular shape with closed circumferential ends, ii) at least one aperture extending radially from ~~through a first exterior-face-wall to and through a second exterior-face-wall~~ of said external member, and iii) an aperture extending longitudinally from a first end to a second end of the external member; and

an internal member rotatably coupled to said external member, said internal member having at least one receiver for receiving said at least one suture,

wherein said device is adapted for placement within said wound.

2. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 1, wherein ~~said at least one suture is passed through said at least one receiver in said internal member~~ is adapted to allow said at least one suture to pass therethrough, said at least one suture ~~being adapted to couple~~ coupled to portions of said wound, and said internal member is further adapted to rotate ~~tightened by rotating said internal member~~ in a first direction to winding said suture at least partially around an exterior surface of said internal member to draw said portions of said wound toward one another.

3. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said at least one receiver is at least one of i) an aperture extending radially through said shaft, ii) a hook disposed within said shaft, iii) a substantially "T" shaped element coupled to an external portion of said shaft, and iv) a substantially hook shaped element coupled to an external portion of said shaft.

4. (Currently Amended) A device for use with sutures to repair a wound of a patient, said device comprising:

a closed tubular body having i) closed circumferential ends, ii) at least one aperture extending radially through said body from a first exterior-facewall to a second exterior-facewall thereof, said first wall opposing said second wall of said tubular body, and iii) an aperture extending longitudinally from a first end to a second end of said body; and

a shaft at least partially disposed within and rotatably coupled to said tubular body, said shaft having a plurality of apertures and/or slots substantially in line with said at least one aperture in said body, said plurality of apertures spaced apart from one another and extending radially through said shaft.

5. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 4, wherein said device is adapted for placement within said wound.

6. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 5, wherein ~~said sutures are passed through said at least one aperture in said body and said plurality of apertures in said shaft are adapted to allow said sutures to pass therethrough,~~ said sutures adapted to couple being coupled to portions of said wound, and said shaft is further adapted to rotate ~~tightened by rotating said shaft in a first direction to draw said portions of said wound toward one another.~~

7. (Original) The device according to claim 6, further comprising means for preventing said shaft from rotating in a direction opposite to said first direction.

8. (Original) The device according to claim 7, wherein said means is a coil spring disposed between an outer surface of said shaft and an inner surface of said body.

9. (Original) The device according to claim 8, wherein a diameter of said coil spring increases as said shaft is rotated in said first direction.

10. (Original) The device according to claim 9, further comprising means for releasing tension of said coil spring to permit said shaft to rotate in said second direction.

11. (Original) The device according to claim 10, wherein said means for releasing tension comprises an end portion of said coil spring, said end portion being moved in a direction to increase said diameter of said coil spring to permit said shaft to be rotated in a direction opposite to said first direction.

12. (Original) The device according to claim 11, wherein said end portion at least one of extends through a portion of said body and extends beyond an end of said body.

13. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 4, wherein said body further comprises a coupling at an end portion adapted to ~~for providing~~ provide a vacuum to an interior of said wound to extract exudates from said wound.

14. (Original) The device according to claim 13, wherein said shaft has an orifice extending at least partially along a longitudinal axis of said shaft, said orifice coupled to said coupling and at least one of said plurality of holes and/or slots of said shaft for providing said vacuum to said interior of said wound.

15. (Original) The device according to claim 14, wherein said body has at least one orifice extending from an outer portion of said body in fluid tight relation with said coupling for providing said vacuum to said interior of said wound.

16. (Original) The device according to claim 4, further comprising a means for applying a rotational force to an end of said shaft to rotate said shaft with respect to said body.

17. (Original) The device according to claim 4, wherein said patient is a human.

18. (Original) The device according to claim 4, wherein said patient is an animal.

19-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) A device for use with sutures to repair a wound of a patient, said device comprising:

a tubular body having a first plurality of apertures extending radially through said tubular body, said plurality of apertures spaced apart from one another along a length of said tubular body; ~~and~~

a shaft disposed within and rotatably coupled to said tubular body, said shaft having a respective plurality of apertures and/or slots substantially in line with said apertures in said tubular body, said respective plurality of apertures spaced apart from one another and extending radially through said shaft; and

means for retaining said shaft within said tubular body such that said shaft remains within said tubular body in response to a lateral tension exerted on said shaft.

28. (Withdrawn) A device for use with sutures to repair a wound of a patient, said device comprising:

a substantially U shaped body having a first passage and a second passage in line with one another; and

a shaft rotatably coupled to said body at said first and second passage, said shaft having a plurality of receivers spaced apart from one another and one of extending radially through or coupled to said shaft.

29 - 33. (Cancelled)

34. (New) A device for aiding in the closure of a wound for use with at least one suture, said device comprising:

an external member having at least one aperture extending radially from a first exterior face to a second exterior face of said external member;

an internal member rotatably coupled to said external member, said internal member having at least one receiver for receiving said at least one suture; and

means for retaining said internal member within said external member,

wherein said device is adapted for placement within said wound.

35. (New) A device for aiding in the closure of a wound for use with at least one suture said device comprising:

an external member; and

an internal member rotatably coupled to said external member said internal member having at least one receiver for receiving said at least one suture,

wherein said device capable of maintaining tension on said at least one suture secured to opposing margins of said wound when said device is placed between said opposing margins of said wound, and said external member is adapted to retain said internal member within said external member when said at least one suture is secured to said opposing margins and said one suture is under tension.